not desist. Is that so? Was not the body of R. Joseph taken out shortly before the time for the Shema'? — An exception can be made for a distinguished man.

BEFORE THE BIER AND BEHIND THE BIER. Our Rabbis taught: Those who are occupied with the funeral speeches, if the dead body is still before them, slip out one by one and recite the Shema'; if the body is not before them, they sit and recite it, and he [the mourner] sits silent; they stand up and say the tefillah and he stands up and accepts God's judgement and says: Sovereign of the Universe, I have sinned much before Thee and Thou didst not punish me one thousandth part. May it be Thy will, O Lord our God, to close up our breaches and the breaches of all Thy people the house of Israel in mercy! Abaye said: A man should not speak thus,[28] since R. Simeon b. Lakish said, and so it was taught in the name of R. Jose: A man should never speak in such a way as to give an opening to Satan. And R. Joseph said: What text proves this? Because it says: We were almost like Sodom.[29] What did the prophet reply to them? Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom.[30]

WHEN THEY HAVE BURIED THE DEAD BODY AND RETURNED, etc. [I understand]: If they are able to begin and go through all of it, yes, but if they have only time for one section or one verse, no. This statement was contradicted by the following: When they have buried the body and returned, if they are able to begin and complete even one section or one verse, [they do so]! — That is just what he says: If they are able to begin and go through even one section or one verse before they form a row, they should begin, but otherwise they should not begin.

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(1) MS.M.: Did not R. Papa make etc.; cf. next note.

(2) MS.M.: and nearly broke (lit., 'wished to break') his skull. This suits better the reading of MS.M. mentioned in previous note.

(3) Lit., 'his honour'.

(4) Lit., 'Speaks after the bier of scholars'.

(5) Heb. mattim, connected by R. Joshua with mittathan (their bier) above.

(6) Ps. CXXV,5.

(7) To Gehinnom.

(8) I.e., the Mishnah as a whole.

(9) 'Ed. V, 6.

(10) Akabiah b. Mahalalel.

(11) A woman suspected of infidelity. V. Num. V, 11ff.

(12) They were supposed to be descended from Sennacherib and so from a family of proselytes. Others render: they only pretended to administer it.

(13) V. 'Ed. V. 6 (Sonc. ed.) notes.

(14) When they all assembled there to kill their paschal lambs.

(15) Pes. 64b.

(16) The word Me'aggel probably means 'circle-drawer'; v. Ta'an. 19a.

(17) Aliter: 'take liberties with'.

(18) Prov. XXIII, 25. V. Ta'an 19a.

(19) Lit., 'Helmeted goats' — goats roasted whole with their entrails and legs placed on the head, like a helmet. This was how the Passover sacrifice was roasted.

(20) V. Pes. (Sonc. ed.) p. 260 notes.

(21) An earthenware stove which has been declared unclean, and cannot be used till it has been broken up and remade.

(22) To cement them.

(23) After contact with such a stove.

(24) Euphemism for 'excommunicated'.

(25) V. B.M. (Sonc. ed.) 59b notes.

(26) The last statement being from a Baraitha.

(27) I.e., he takes count of all the cases where the ruling of the Rabbis was disregarded by an individual, and excommunication should have been incurred, even if this is not mentioned.